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LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN THE ALL-DAY  
KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Education:  
Reading/Language Arts

---

by  
Lannette Christine Celaya

June 2000

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by  
Lannette Christine Celaya  
June 2000

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## ABSTRACT

In today's society kindergarten education continues to escalate academic demands. With the increased pressure on today's kindergartner there has been a renewed interest in all-day kindergarten. This project begins by looking at kindergarten from a historical perspective. It reviews research relating to all-day kindergarten and half-day kindergarten programs. It demonstrates that increased instructional time is beneficial especially for those low-achieving or disadvantaged students.

This project also includes a handbook. This handbook outlines a schedule for a literacy enriched all-day kindergarten program. It identifies and defines each instructional component that is essential to the kindergarten program in the areas of reading and writing. It gives examples of lessons and activities that can be utilized to increase the literacy of a kindergarten child.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project is dedicated to Andrew Robledo, a future kindergartner and all other kindergartners of the past, present, and future who continue to touch my heart with their laughter, innocence, wisdom, and love.

I would also like to thank my husband Chad Simmons, my family, and my friends whose invaluable support through all my educational goals here at Cal State, San Bernardino was greatly appreciated, needed, and cherished.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Statement of the Problem

In the past, for the majority of young children, kindergarten retained its focus on developing readiness through socialization experiences. Readiness for elementary education was defined in terms of attitudes and motivation rather than specific academic achievements. Today kindergarten has become an experience for which children need to be ready for when they arrive. Where once there was a sense of freedom with regard to the curriculum, now there is pressure on parents and teachers to make sure that children are ready to learn. As a result, kindergarten must assume a more demanding role. It must account for the widely diverse abilities of today's kindergartners.

Over half of the children entering kindergarten today have received some type of pre-kindergarten school experience. These children usually have overcome the separation anxiety associated with beginning school, have learned to interact with peers and adults, and have developed many of the cognitive skills necessary for more formal academic activities. There are also children who have had extensive experience with language and print at home. They have been read to regularly and have had lots of opportunities to draw and talk about their drawings. Their caretakers have pointed out environmental print in

grocery stores, while traveling in cars, and in daily excursions. Marilyn Adams (1990), a current leader in reading research, suggests that students who have had at least 1000 hours of literacy experience before entering school will be successful in learning to read. There is still another type of child that will be ready to progress academically, and that is the developmentally mature child. All of these children described will undoubtedly succeed in learning to read and write.

Unfortunately, according to Charlesworth (1989), it appears that more and more children are "at risk" for kindergarten failure. This at-risk child demonstrates the potential for having difficulty with the academics of first grade, particularly in reading. These children are not mentally disabled nor do they have a specific learning disability. Special Education programs assist this kind of child. Rather, this child is the child who is immature or has had no pre-kindergarten experience. The child may have just met the deadline for entrance into kindergarten. At times, this child has a short attention span and hasn't learned to concentrate or focus on task. The child could have had no prior experience, may have had little or no interaction with storybooks, or have very little knowledge of the alphabet. There may also be children in the group who speak different languages at varying levels of

proficiency. These characteristics make the at risk child susceptible to academic failure.

The International Reading Association(IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children(NAEYC) point out in their joint position statement that:

Because of these individual and experiential variations, it is common to find within a kindergarten classroom a 5-year range in children's literacy-related skills and functioning (Riley, 1996). What this means is that some kindergartners may have skills characteristic of the typical 3-year old, while others might be functioning at the level of the typical 8-year old. (1998, p. 5).

The half-day kindergarten program currently in use is not able to provide sufficient time to meet the needs of these two groups of children. It is often physically and mentally exhausting for the teacher. This project will begin by looking toward research to support the positive outcomes an all-day kindergarten program will provide.

In the text Preventing Early School Failure: Research, Policy, and Practice it is suggested that those children who will need additional support for early language and literacy development should receive it as early as possible (Karweit, Madden, Slavin, and Wasik, 1994). An all-day kindergarten program is needed as intervention for the wide range of capabilities within a group of kindergartners as well as to provide more individualized instruction. An all-day program would

provide children with the foundation skills they need before they encounter failure. It would allow more time to promote language and literacy growth and address a variety of skills that have been identified as predictors of later reading achievement. Marilyn Adams and Jean Osborne (1990) assign the three most powerful predictors of children's success in learning to read are:

(1) preschoolers' ability to recognize and name letters of the alphabet, (2) their general knowledge about text (which is the front of the book and which is the back, whether the story is told by the pictures or the print, and which way to turn the pages of a book), and (3) their awareness of phonemes (the speech sounds that correspond roughly to individual letters) (p. 6).

The all-day setting would provide time for a more well developed literacy program.

The second part of this project will be a Handbook with a suggested all-day kindergarten program. Kindergarten instruction should be designed to: stimulate verbal interaction; to enrich children's vocabularies; to encourage talk about books; to provide practice with the sound structure of words; to develop knowledge about print, including the production and recognition of letters; and to generate familiarity with the basic purposes and mechanisms of reading. Although the half-day kindergarten initiates these literacy experiences it is the extra time spent engaged in these activities that makes the difference in an all-day setting. Teachers are

able to implement additional activities and they have more time to model and scaffold for children in these areas of literacy instruction. The all-day kindergarten program will also allow more time to assess the children's knowledge and to offer activities that differ according to the needs of the children. Each child's process of learning and experiential background will be considered. Because early literacy development is of great concern at this time the California State Standards for Language Arts will be kept in mind when designing this program. The program will focus on integrating literacy experiences throughout the entire kindergarten day. It will identify the instructional components needed for a successful literacy program in kindergarten. Then it will describe these components in detail, including structures and experiences.

A report published by the New Jersey State Department (1985) indicated nine reasons for changing from the traditional half-day kindergarten to an all-day kindergarten that are worthy of note:

1. Over half of the children in the United States receive some type of pre-kindergarten experience, and much of this experience is for a full day.
2. Children have more opportunities to become a part of the school because they can more frequently use facilities such as the gymnasium, cafeteria, auditorium, and library.
3. Children may have access to specialists in art, music, and physical education.



4. Children with special needs can benefit from services in the full-day elementary school schedule.
5. Children have opportunities for more field trips.
6. Teachers can pace instruction to help children acquire new skills and concepts with ample time to practice, apply, and consolidate new learning.
7. Teachers can provide more effectively for the individual needs of children who have different home and preschool experiences.
8. Transportation can be provided before and after school, eliminating the need for midday transportation.
9. Parents prefer full-day kindergarten and will enroll children in schools that offer the program. (p.105)

The beginning years are the most critical in the intellectual, visual motor, psycholinguistic, and personality development of a child. In the past, the focus of the kindergarten program was only on the social, emotional, and physical development of the child. Today, kindergarten is an academic program that stresses formal reading and writing instruction and is designed to prepare the child for academic success in first grade. The all-day kindergarten offers a solution for meeting the needs of all its students.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

This chapter will present the literature related to the all-day kindergarten program. It will begin with a review of the history of kindergarten including trends related to the length of day for kindergarten classrooms in the United States. It will continue with the presentation of studies that compare half-day and all-day kindergarten programs. Finally it will end with a summary that demonstrates how these findings support an all-day kindergarten curriculum.

#### Historical Perspectives

Historically, kindergarten began as a full-day program. Friedrich Froebel, after twenty-four years as a teacher, established the first kindergarten in 1837 in Blankenburg, Germany. He called the school "children's garden" because he believed that children were just like plants in a garden. He saw them as all being different, needing someone to cater to their own individual needs. Froebel believed children should attend kindergarten for the following reasons:

To strengthen their bodily powers; to exercise their senses; to employ their awakening mind; to make them thoughtfully acquainted with the world of nature and of man; to guide their heart and soul in the right direction, and lead them to the origin of all life. (Bernard, 1981, p. 91)

Froebel showed that young children were capable of rapid skill acquisition if they were taught through use of manipulative materials which he called "gifts". These gifts allowed them to exercise their tendency toward active play while they developed their minds (Williams and Fromberg, 1992).

Froebel's ideas were first published in the United States in an 1856 pamphlet issued by the American Journal of Education. The first U.S. kindergarten was started that year in Watertown, Wisconsin, by Margeret Schurz, a student of Froebel's in Germany. Schurz conducted her program in German for her daughter and other children. Education advocate Elizabeth Peabody was so impressed by the abilities of Schurz's daughter that she opened the first English-speaking kindergarten in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1860 (Morrow, Strickland, & Woo, 1998). But it was not until the depression of the 30's, the second World War, and the early postwar years that the attention of the American public became more sharply focused than ever before on the needs of young children (Foster and Headley, 1966). Research results in the area of child development were presented to the public through exhibits, films, radio programs, and popular articles. Federal programs were set up to provide for the welfare of young children. It was at this time that we received our WPA programs which established schools for nursery school

age children and later extended school services for older children. These programs were set up chiefly for the care of children whose mothers were employed in war production plants. This indicated that the changing pattern in our society called for a re-evaluation of the type of schools that we were providing for young children. It was in those years that the public in general and parents in particular gained new insights into the needs of young children. More adults became actively aware of the importance of early childhood education (Shapiro, 1983).

Kindergarten in the United States began as an all-day program, but there are varied reasons for the introduction of the half-day program. One explanation is due to the Great Depression. The half-day program developed in response to the need to accommodate larger numbers of children and to reduce costs (Gorton, 1968). The half-day enabled one teacher to accommodate two different groups of children in the same classroom each day. World War II also influenced this cut back to half-day kindergarten programs. There was a shortage of teachers while the men were in the armed services, together with a shortage of classroom building space. An increased birth rate in the 1950s known as the "baby boomers era" also contributed to most kindergartens becoming half-day every day. At this time, others believed that 5 year olds were not mature enough for all-day school (Puleo, 1988).

All-day kindergarten surfaced again in the 60's and 70's. This trend seemed to be fueled largely by a new push for academics that stretched from kindergarten through college. The U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare reports that in the 1969-70 school year 13.8% of the children enrolled in kindergarten were attending full-day (Barker, 1971). Hawaii established many of these programs and have continued to have all-day everyday kindergarten since 1955 (Gorton, 1968).

Many other countries in the world have all-day everyday schools for kindergarten age children. The British Infant School has all-day school for children ages four to five. In Belgium, 90% of the children three to five years of age attend school from 8:30 to 4:15 (Oelerich, 1979). In France, children two to five years of age attend school for six hours per day; 23% of the two year olds and 70% of the five year olds are enrolled in these programs (Tizard, 1979). Kindergarten programs in Russia are scheduled from 7:30 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. (Weaver, 1971).

#### Kindergarten Today

Currently there is much ferment in education. Educators are constantly seeking ways to help children reach their fullest potential. Many are in constant search for new materials and approaches that will stimulate children's learning. New knowledge about children's

development and learning makes some of the old methods seem outdated. While dynamic research and changes in our society have brought forth new approaches to utilize in our classrooms.

One of these recent trends is the idea that academic training should start before first grade. The California Language Arts Standards reflect this push for a more academic kindergarten. Unfortunately half-day kindergarten programs are struggling to successfully meet the needs of all students in a three hour day. The International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) noted in their joint statement that, "Experienced teachers throughout the U.S. report that the children they teach today are more diverse in their backgrounds, experiences, and abilities than were those they taught in the past" (1998, p.4-5). The half-day kindergarten program is not able to effectively take into account the widely diverse abilities and experiences of today's young children. It must focus not only on the social, affective, and physical, but also on the cognitive areas of learning. It must provide for the identification and remediation of early learning deficiencies as well as individualized instruction according to each child's needs. In short, the new demanding function of kindergarten requires more instructional time and better instructional tools than presently exist in traditional

half-day kindergarten programs. According to Jones (1988) a full-day kindergarten is essential to the implementation of a more involved curriculum. The kindergarten can no longer be viewed as an isolated experience; it is part of the early childhood education continuum involving pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and the primary grades.

### Research Review

A number of studies exist showing the benefits of the all-day kindergarten. One study conducted by Winter and Klein (1970) examined an all-day kindergarten program in conjunction with a more individualized curriculum. Two different groups of kindergartners were chosen to participate in the all-day program. One group was identified as educationally disadvantaged and "least ready" for kindergarten instruction; the other group was identified as educationally advantaged and "most ready" for kindergarten instruction. Control groups for the regular half-day kindergarten were identified to match characteristics of these experimental groups. All the children attended the regular kindergarten program in the morning. In the afternoon the experimental groups received additional instruction. For the advantaged group, the additional time was used for creative approaches to learning that capitalized on the children's individual interests. For the disadvantaged group, the additional time was used to diagnose the children's difficulties and

to adjust their lessons accordingly. Winter and Klein reported that the achievement of students in the extended-day program far exceeded the achievement of half-day students on all parts of the Metropolitan Readiness Test administered at the end of the kindergarten year. They also exceeded the non-extended day pupils on both the Lee-Clark and the Stanford Achievement Test. A follow-up of these children conducted after the first grade revealed even more positive effects of the extended-day kindergarten program. Based on the Stanford Achievement Test, the disadvantaged experimental pupils exceeded the control children by nearly three stanine units, while the advantaged experimental pupils exceeded their controls by more than one grade equivalent unit.

In the 1977-78 school year, Carapella and Loveridge (1978) completed a study of the all-day program in the Saint Louis Public Schools. The all-day program provided supplementary instruction for kindergarten pupils tested with the Cooperative Preschool Inventory and identified as having educational deficiencies. These pupils in the Title I program attended school for a full day. The results of their evaluation was that students who attended the all day kindergarten for the entire year showed higher achievement on the first grade selection instrument, the California Tests of Basic Skills. They also found that the all-day kindergarten pupils outperformed their half-



day Kindergarten counterparts on the Basic Schools Skills Inventory.

Humphrey (1980) reviewed the all-day kindergarten program of the Evansville-Vanderburgh School District System. The purpose of the study was to present some findings relative to the benefits and effectiveness of total learning in full-day kindergarten as compared to the traditional half-day kindergarten program. The school system implemented and conducted a full-day pilot program during the second semester of the 1978-79 school year. The program continued through the 1979-80 full school year. Full-day kindergarten children in four pilot schools (experimental group) and a random sampling, of half-day kindergarten children (control group) from schools containing the half-day kindergarten session participated in the study. It was hypothesized that children who attended the full-day kindergarten program would show greater growth in cognitive, psychomotor, affective, linguistic skills than those children who attended the half-day kindergarten. To test this hypothesis, each child from both groups was administered three evaluation instruments. These were the California Achievements Tests, The Boehm Tests of Basic Concepts, and the Gates-Mac Ginitie Reading Tests. Personal interviews, questionnaires and observations were used to collect additional information from teachers and parents. Results

revealed that full-day kindergarten students scored significantly higher on the three tests; that most parents of the children (91%) who attended full-day kindergarten preferred the full-day; and that full-day kindergarten teachers have a favorable attitude about the full-day program. Furthermore, follow-up testing when the children were first graders indicated significantly higher reading scores for the students who attended full-day kindergarten compared to those who had attended half-day.

Johnson (1987) completed a study of the all-day kindergarten program of the Columbus (Ohio) Public Schools that was established to provide a full day of instruction for underachieving kindergarten pupils. The program concentrated on preparing pupils for successful learning experiences in first grade by providing them with an extra half day of instruction. There was an emphasis on activities that would increase language and reading development and enhance those skills needed for success in first grade. The program served 571 children in 18 Chapter I eligible elementary schools. For program evaluation purposes, pretests and posttests were administered to 396 students (who met the 80% attendance requirement); 379 students were present for both tests. The Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) gain for these students was 3.0 points for each month of treatment-greatly exceeding the criterion of 1.0 NCE point that was the original program

goal. Results suggest the efficacy of the all-day Kindergarten Program.

Johnson completed a more recent study that began in September of 1991 (1993) in the Columbus (Ohio) Public Schools. The all-day kindergarten program in Columbus has continued to prepare underachieving kindergarten pupils for first grade. Her recent study evaluated the all-day kindergarten in terms of: (1) children's successful completion of 12 of 17 items on a test of early concepts about print; and (2) participation of parents in their children's education. The evaluation was based on data from standardized achievement tests, pupil census logs, pupil data sheets and rosters, and parent involvement logs. The evaluation sample comprised those students who attended at least 80% of the instructional period. Of those, over 88% successfully completed 12 or more of the 17 items on the concepts about print test. Parents of 99.1% of the pupils participated in at least one program-related activity during the year.

In order to see if an all-day kindergarten program has a greater effect than a half-day kindergarten program on reading achievement in the first grade Mongiardo (1988) completed a study. The study compared standardized test scores of two different groups of first grade students. Subjects, a group of 44 students who had participated in a half-day kindergarten program and a second group of 80

students who had participated in an all-day kindergarten program, were administered the Science Research Associates Achievement Series. Results indicated that the scores of the children in the all-day kindergarten were higher than the scores of the children in the half-day kindergarten program.

Another study comparing the reading achievement of first grade students who attended half-day kindergarten to that of students who attended full-day kindergarten, was completed by Harrison-McEachern (1989). Subjects, 67 students in urban Newark, New Jersey, who had attended half-day and 66 students who attended full day kindergarten, were given the first grade Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills after 8 months in the first grade. The total reading scores for the two groups were then compared. Results indicated that students who attended full-day kindergarten scored significantly higher than students who had attended half-day kindergarten.

The Ohio State Legislative Office of Education Oversight (1997) published a document providing an overview of full day kindergarten. They found research to support that full-day kindergarten classrooms improved academic achievement for children, and significantly improve academic achievement for children at risk. The State Legislative Office found superintendents of districts that provided full-day kindergarten to perceive

strong advantages. They attributed increase academic performance and adjustment to first grade to full-day kindergarten. Further, these superintendents indicated that many of their "customers", the taxpaying parents, desire the full-day classes.

A longitudinal study conducted in the Cincinnati public schools offers evidence that all-day kindergarten programs do have long term educational benefits (Nieman and Gastright, 1981). The study began in September of 1970 with 410 enrolled in all-day kindergarten classes and 141 that were enrolled in conventional half-day kindergarten classes. After only three months of kindergarten the all-day students scored higher than their half-day counterparts on each of the subtests of the Boehm Test of Basic Concepts. At the end of the school year the Metropolitan Readiness Test showed extreme differences in favor of the all-day kindergarten group. The mean raw score for the students in the all-day kindergarten program was 42, compared with a mean raw score of 23 for those enrolled in the half day program. In 1975, when these children were in the fourth grade, and again when they were eight graders, their total reading and total mathematics subtest scores on the Metropolitan Achievement Tests were compared. They found that the superiority displayed by the all-day kindergarten group on the test had been maintained through grades four and eight. Their

fourth grade mean standard scores were 12 percentiles higher than those of the half-day group. In eighth grade, the all-day kindergarten group outperformed their counterparts by six percentiles. Moreover, proportionately fewer students in the all-day group had repeated a grade or been assigned to special education classes than in the half-day group.

Puleo (1988) reviewed and critiqued 19 studies regarding the full-day kindergarten program. The review reported the effects that kindergarten programs of varying lengths had on various basic skills, such as knowledge of letters, sounds, colors, numbers, and other variables, such as motivation and self-esteem. All of the studies reported differences in favor of all-day or extended-day kindergarten programs on all or most of the variables studied. None of the studies favored half-day programs.

The most recent study was published in 1998 by the International Reading Association. The purpose of this study, conducted by Morrow, Strickland, and Woo, was to determine the effect of whole-day kindergarten and half-day kindergarten on the literacy achievement of children in inner-city schools. Five half-day and five whole-day kindergarten classrooms in one urban school district were selected randomly for the investigation. Four girls and four boys were selected randomly as subjects from each of the classrooms for the analysis of literacy achievement.

Ninety-five percent of the children in the study were from minority backgrounds, and 5% were Caucasian. All teachers in the study were experienced. In October the following measures were administered to the children in the study: a Probed Recall Listening Comprehension Test, a Story Retelling Test, a Writing Sample Test, a Story Reenactment Test, a Kindergarten Inventory of Concepts About Print, and Teacher Ratings of Children's Interest and Ability in Reading and Writing. Teachers and children were also interviewed concerning their attitudes toward whole-day and half-day programs. In May all of the pretest measures were administered again as posttests. The results from the literacy achievement data indicated that the children in the whole-day kindergarten scored significantly better on all the tests administered than the children in the half-day program. They concluded that the activities and the quality of instruction were similar in both settings, but that it was the extra time spent with the literacy activities that attributed to the difference.

One concern for the young child attending a full-day kindergarten program is his ability to physically and psychologically adapt to that much time in school. This concern was addressed by Winter and Klein (1970) who reported that signs of fatigue, frustration, or waning interest in school simply did not appear in their experimental pupils. Similarly, in the study by Humphrey

(1980), an examination of attendance patterns indicated no differences in absenteeism of children compared to the half-day program. In fact, a far higher percentage of children in the full-day program in the Winter and Klein study were reported to experience very positive feelings about school than did children in the half-day program.

Lastly it is important to note that support for the all-day kindergarten has come from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the International Reading Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the American Association of School Administrators. In 1970 the American Association of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Educators passed a resolution that a full-day kindergarten be available to all children to accommodate the needs of kindergarten children and teachers (Hess, 1978). Bronfenbrenner (1975) also has recommended that all-day kindergarten be made an "integral" part of the public schools, which can be successfully implemented only with a massive, publicly administered program.

### Summary

Children enter kindergarten with different preschool reading and writing experiences: some write with scribbling and others with letters; some have lots of storybooks in their past and recite them eagerly; for others, books seem pretty unfamiliar. Therefore the most



important child-centered consideration is that the child receive literacy instruction at his or her appropriate level. In all-day kindergarten, the teacher has the time to regularly assess each child's progress, to diagnose deficiencies, and to alter the instruction accordingly. As a result, each child can regularly encounter success, develop a positive attitude about literacy and learning, and require special education services less frequently.

It is a key priority in kindergarten to prepare children to learn to read. If children do not enter first grade with good attitudes and knowledge about literacy they will probably find first grade instruction inaccessible. Research demonstrates the academic achievement that is attainable in the all-day kindergarten. The all-day kindergarten will ensure that more students meet the academic standards set by the state of California and are ready for first grade. Its extended time will also provide for a more boundless literacy based curriculum. All of these benefits are immeasurable to the child's later success in school and in life.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Goals and Limitations

#### Goals

The purpose of the all-day kindergarten program is threefold. The first goal is to serve as an early intervention. In today's society kindergarten education continues to escalate academic demands, particularly in schools serving disadvantaged students in which early success in academics is viewed as an avenue to preventing future failure. Research and case studies of extended learning time have indicated that increased instructional time is beneficial especially for those low-achieving or disadvantaged students who might need more time than typically available to master specific skills.

The second goal of the all-day kindergarten program is a more individualized program. The all-day kindergarten setting allows the teacher to cater more to the individual needs of the child. The teacher will have the time to regularly assess each child's progress, to diagnose deficiencies, and to alter the instruction accordingly. As a result, each child can regularly encounter success, develop a positive attitude about literacy and learning, and require special education services less frequently.

The third goal of the all-day kindergarten program is to increase literacy development. An all-day kindergarten program will allow more time to emphasize a curriculum rich in language and literacy. The quality of literacy

instruction in an all-day kindergarten setting verses a half-day setting might not differ. But rather the difference is in the quantity. It is the extra time spent in these quality literacy experiences that makes the difference in an all-day kindergarten program. Teachers will be able to implement additional activities and will have more time to model and scaffold for children in areas of literacy instruction.

### Limitations

There are two major limitations in regards to the all-day kindergarten program. The first is the cost of implementing such a program. Currently in the traditional half-day program two teachers are able to share the same classroom as well as materials. With the implementation of an all-day kindergarten program each teacher would need their own classroom. Therefore there would be the cost of more classrooms as well as the start-up expense of these new classrooms to consider.

The second major limitation of implementing an all-day kindergarten program is the quantity and quality of research in the area. Much of the research is from the 1970's and 1980's, and we need to investigate this important issue as it is related to current instruction. Also some feel that the quality of research has not been scientifically rigorous enough and therefore it is premature to determine if the findings are as positive as

studies have supported. Another problem with the existing research is the need to evaluate other variables in relation to the all-day kindergarten program such as curriculum, class size, socioeconomic status, student attendance patterns, education of parents, cultural values, and instructional strategies used by teachers. There are many substantive reasons for supporting all-day kindergarten. However, additional research needs to be conducted with the appropriate scientific rigor to develop understanding of when, where, how, and with what populations such programs should be implemented.

APPENDIX A  
AN ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

## AN ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

### CHAPTER ONE

#### An All-Day Kindergarten Schedule

All kindergarten programs, either traditional or all-day should have an appropriate literacy curriculum in place that will help all children grow in knowledge, dispositions, and skills to become capable and confident emergent readers and writers. Activities that develop literacy must be integrated throughout the school day. On a daily basis children should have the opportunity to engage in a variety of reading and writing experiences including: read aloud and response experiences; shared reading; guided reading; independent reading from books and from their own writing; shared writing; interactive writing, guided writing/writer's workshop, and independent writing.

In scheduling the school day, teachers should include whole-class, small group, and one-to-one settings for learning. There needs to be teacher-directed experiences as well as activities in which children participate independently. Children should be involved in collaborative literacy experiences as well. Following is a suggested schedule for an all-day kindergarten. It must be kept in mind that this is simply a guideline in which to build from. As every teacher knows schedules are constantly changing and being modified to meet the needs of the children.

### *Suggested Schedule*

*8:00 to 8:20- Free Choice Activities (Activities will change as the year progresses based on themes and needs of students)*

1. Block Play: creating block structures and role playing with the structures.
2. Dramatic Play: role playing in the playhouse, or with the puppets.
3. Listening Center: use of headsets with taped stories to listen to books.
4. Computers: use of math or language arts programs.
5. Games: use of board games, puzzles, dominoes, etc.
6. Alphabet Center: use of alphabet stencils, salt trays, play dough and alphabet cookie cutters, alphabet books, alphabet flash cards, magnetic letters, electronic phonics board, alphabet markers, alphabet stamps, alphabet puzzles, and alphabet trace mats.
7. Math Center: use of linker cubes, pattern blocks, attribute shapes, counting bears, salt trays, stencils, dominoes, playdough with cookie cutter numbers, a balance scale, and magnetic numbers.
8. Art Activities: easel painting, coloring pictures, creating original pictures, and making collages.

9. Library Corner: comfortable area with pillows, beanbags, and a rug where students can read books.

\*Note: While students are engaged in activities the teacher will utilize this time to hold individual conferences to address special needs and/or to assess student progress.

*8:20 to 9:00- Morning Gathering on Rug: Whole Group*

1. Attendance and Lunch Count
2. Math Their Way Calendar and Weather
3. Mystery Box/Oral Language Development: Each day a different student takes home the mystery box and brings it back the next day with something inside it. They must also bring to school three written clues which they will read to the class. Then classmates will try and guess what they brought in the mystery box.
4. Daily News/Morning Message (Modeled/Shared Writing): In the beginning of the school year the lesson will be modeled writing. As the teacher observes that the students are ready to participate, it becomes a shared writing lesson. The lessons are whole group and the teacher writes on chart paper in front of the class. Morning Message is when the teacher writes a message to the students about what will be happening that day. Daily news is when a



student gets to share news and possibly illustrate a picture.

5. Read Aloud and Responses: The teacher reads a literature book related to the theme being addressed in class. After reading, students are encouraged to talk about the story in ways that personalize it for them.

#### *9:00-9:15 Introduction of Centers*

Teacher models what is to take place at each of the four centers. Students are broken up into four groups of five based on ability. Groups will cycle through each center. Centers will last approximately 15-20 minutes. It should be noted that all center activities could vary slightly from group to group since they are grouped according to ability and centers will be based on their needs.

#### *9:15 to 10:15- Centers*

Center One: Literacy Center (Teacher Guided)

This center varies throughout the year. Some activities might include shared reading, phonics activities, phonemic awareness activities, or making words activities. Four to six months after the school year begins (depending on students' growth) this

center will become the guided reading center on a daily basis.

Center Two: Math Center (Adult Guided)

This center is ran by either an instructional aide or parent volunteer. Activities may vary for each group depending on the needs and levels of the students.

Center Three: Guided Writing (Independent)

Students will write using direct copy, a pattern, or fill-in-the blank format to create class books or individual books. Students will also include illustrations. Activities will vary as the year progresses.

Center Four: Independent Activity

These activities will vary but can be as follows:

- a. phonics activity
- b. penmanship: practice writing upper and lowercase letters, attending to the form and proper spacing
- c. theme related activity
- d. math activity
- e. art activity
- f. content area activity
- g. listening center

*10:15 to 10:35-Snack and Recess*

*10:35 to 11:35- Writer's Workshop*

Writer's Workshop will begin daily with a mini-lesson with the teacher modeling the desired behavior. These mini-lessons could pertain to a variety of skills. There are four centers and four groups. Groups will only visit two centers a day, 15-20 minute cycles). Workshop will end each day with Author' Chair (students will get to read something they wrote during Writer's Workshop).

*11:35 to 12:20-Lunch and Outdoor Play*

*12:20 to 12:30-Sustained Silent Reading (independent reading) students choose books from leveled reading boxes.*

*12:30 to 1:00-Phonemic Awareness or Phonics Activity*

*1:00 to 1:30-Whole group lesson in Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, OR Math.*

A different lesson in one of these content areas can take place daily.

*1:30 to 1:40-Shared Reading Lesson*

Using an enlarged text that all children can see, the teacher involves children in reading together following a pointer. The process can include reading

big books, poems, songs, pocket charts, or products from interactive writing.

*1:40 to 2:00-Interactive Writing*

The teacher and the children collaborate to write lists, messages, or stories.

*2:00 to 2:15-Performance of Tasks Completed, Discuss Homework, Get Ready to Go Home, and Dismissal.*

## CHAPTER TWO

### Instructional Components of Reading

#### Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic awareness is the understanding that speech is made up of a series of individual sounds. This awareness is not innate, it must be acquired. Children who have developed phonemic awareness recognize that words can rhyme, can begin or end with the same sound, and are composed of phonemes that can be manipulated to create new words. Phonemic awareness must be a part of the reading framework in kindergarten because as Yopp (1992) explains,

In order for children to benefit from formal reading instruction, youngsters must have a certain level of phonemic awareness. Reading instruction, in turns, heightens their awareness of language. Thus phonemic awareness is both a prerequisite and a consequence of learning to read(p.697).

Adams and Osborne (1990) found that children's awareness of phonemes holds the most impressive predictive power of learning to read(statistically accounting for as much as 50% of the variance in their reading proficiency at the end of the first grade). In turn, Ericson and Juliebo (1998) found that children who lack phonemic awareness are among those most likely to become poor readers. Unfortunately, as important as phonemic awareness is to the process of learning to read, it can be a difficult ability for some children to master on their own (Adams, 1990). Studies have demonstrated however that

proper instruction can enhance the development of phonemic awareness and this instruction can be less formal and still result in positive gains in reading (Ericson & Juliebo, 1998). Phonemic awareness can be taught through natural and spontaneous ways through the inclusion of word play in stories, poems, songs, and games (Adams, Foorman, Lundberg, & Beeler, 1998).

Ericson and Juliebo found evidence that a hierarchical degree of difficulty exists for phonemic awareness tasks. Rhyming tasks were the easiest tasks for kindergarten children to perform followed by blending and segmenting, and the most difficult were phoneme deletion tasks. Therefore the path to phonemic awareness is sequential, beginning with listening and identifying rhythm and rhyme, then to syllables, followed by onsets and rimes, and finally to individual sounds within a word.

Once children are able to identify individual sounds within a word they can move on to the difficult level of manipulation of the sounds, which includes blending, segmenting, and phoneme deletion.

The key to developing strong phonemic awareness lies in training and practice. As students progress through different phonemic-awareness levels, they become proficient at listening for and reproducing sounds they hear. Phonemic-awareness instruction helps children understand, use, and apply oral language. Finally it must

be noted that teaching phonemic awareness doesn't take significant amounts of time and should be done in the context of a print-rich environment with multiple language experiences.

Following are a list of twelve quick phonemic awareness activities that can be utilized in kindergarten.

### *Twelve Phonemic Awareness Activities To Get Started*

#### *1. Silly Sentences*

Help children to create silly alliterative sentences, using their name and an action word. For example, "Janet Jumps." or "Mary munches marshmallows." Create an alliteration book using the sentences and have each child illustrate his or her sentence.

#### *2. Do You Know?*

Write the song "Do You Know?" on chart paper. Sing it to the tune of "Muffin Man." Track the print as you sing. Sing the song several times, asking children to suggest one-syllable rhyming words to replace the words king and ring. Write the words on post-it notes and place them in the appropriate place in the song.

Do You Know?

Do you know two rhyming words,

Two rhyming words,

Two rhyming words?

Oh, do you know two rhyming words?

They sound a lot alike.

King and ring are two rhyming words,

Two rhyming words,

Two rhyming words.

King and ring are two rhyming words.

They sound a lot alike.

### 3. *Round- Robin Rhyme*

Invite children to sit in a circle. Tell them that you're going on an imaginary trip. Explain that you will tell them one item that you want to take on the trip and they are to take turns repeating that item and name another item that rhymes. For example, if you say, "I'm going to the park and I'm taking a bat," the next child in the circle might say, "I'm going to the park and I'm taking a bat and a hat."

### 4. *Stand, Sit, and Turn Around*

Using children's names, say a sound, such as /s/. Ask all the children whose name begins with /s/ to stand up, sit down, turn around, clap, or some other movement. To expand the activity you can give each child a picture card.

### 5. *Sound It Out*

Write the song "Sound it Out" on chart paper. Sing the song to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It." At



the end of each singing, say a word in parts for children to orally blend. For example /s/. . at.

#### Sound It Out

If you have a new word, sound it out.

If you have a new word, sound it out.

If you have a new word,

Then slowly say the word.

If you have a new word, sound it out.

#### 6. *What's the Sound?*

Write the song "What's the Sound?" on chart paper. Sing it to the tune "Old McDonald Had a Farm." Track the print as you sing. Sing the song several times, encouraging children to join in. During later singings, replace the word sad and silly with others.

#### What's the Sound?

What's the sound that these words share?

Listen to these words.

Sad and Silly are these two words.

Tell me what you've heard. ssssssss

With a /s/, /s/ here, and a /s/, /s/ there,

Here a /s/, there a /s/, everywhere a /s/, /s/.

/s/ is the sound that these words share.

We can hear that sound!

### *7. Count the Sounds*

Distribute five counters to each child and a sheet of paper with three connected boxes. Explain that you're going to read a word. Tell them they should count how many sounds they hear in the word and place one counter on a box on their paper for each sound they hear. For example, if you say the word cat, children should place three counters on their paper, one on each box.

### *8. Graph It*

Display picture cards. Have the children help you sort the cards according to the number of sounds each picture name contains. Then create a graph using the cards.

### *9. Initial Sound Switch*

Explain to children that you're going to play a word game.

They're going to make new words by replacing the first sound in each word you say with /s/. For example, if you say the word hand, children are to say sand. Continue with other words and sounds.

### *10. Sound of the Day*

Select a sound of the day, such as /l/. Throughout the day, say children's names with that sound in place of the first sound. For example Peter would be called "Leter".

You might want to take attendance this way or line up for recess this way.

#### 11. *Zippity-Do-Dah*

Teach children the following verse. Then have the children repeat the song several times, substituting the initial sounds in the verse with other sounds. For example bippity-bo-bah, mippity-mo-mah, or wippity-wo-wah..

Zippity-zo-zah, Zippity-zay.

My, oh my, what a wonderful day.

Plenty of sunshine coming my way.

Zippity-zo-zah, Zippity-zah.

#### 12. *Sound Switcheroo*

Explain to children that you will say a word. You want them to listen carefully to the sounds in the word. You will then play switcheroo with one of these sounds. That is, you will change one sound in the word-the beginning, middle, or ending sound. You want them to tell you which sound was switched. For example, if you say mat and than sat, children should respond that /m/ was switched with /s/. Some word pairs could be:

man/pan	fan/fat	run/sun	hat/hot	ball/bell
pig/pin	fish/dish	van/ran	zip/lip	cup/c

## Phonics

Where phonemic awareness focuses on the sound units used to form spoken words, phonics instruction associates the sounds to the written symbols, the letters. Phonics is a tool needed by all readers and writers. Its purpose is to help readers identify unknown words quickly and accurately.

Stahl (1992) identifies three stages of phonics learning. The first is the logographic stage in which words are learned as whole units, sometimes embedded in a logo, such as a stop sign. This is followed by the alphabetic stage, in which children use individual letters and sounds to identify words. The last stage is the orthographic stage in which children begin to see patterns in words, and use these patterns to identify words without sounding them out. According to Stahl (1992) all children appear to go through these stages on their way to becoming successful readers. Some will learn to decode on their own, without any instruction. But most will need some degree of instruction, ranging from some pointing out of common spelling patterns to intense and systematic instruction to help them through the alphabetic and orthographic stages.

Teaching phonics, like all teaching involves making decisions about what is best for the students. Although there are many different types of approaches to phonics

instruction, all phonics instruction focuses the learner's attention on the relationships between sounds and symbols as an important strategy for word recognition. Stahl and Duffy-Hester (1998) suggest the following principles of good phonics instruction:

Good phonics instruction should develop the alphabetic principle; Good phonics instruction should develop phonological awareness; Good phonics instruction should provide a thorough grounding in letters; Good phonics instruction should not teach rules. Need not use worksheets, should not dominate instruction, and does not have to be boring; Good phonics instruction provides sufficient practice in reading words and writing words; Good phonics instruction leads to automatic word recognition; Good phonics instruction is one part of reading instruction (p. 339-343).

It is important to remember that phonics and other word-identification skills are tools that children need to read for information, for enjoyment, and for developing insights. But phonics is only one important element in the total reading program and must be integrated accordingly. The intensity and form of phonics instruction used in kindergarten must be adjusted to the individual needs of the children by a well prepared teacher. Following are fifteen phonics activities that could be utilized in the kindergarten classroom.

## *Fifteen Phonics Activities to Get Started*

### *1. Alphabet Corner*

Set up an alphabet corner in your classroom. Stock it with letters to trace, plastic letters for word building, alphabet stamps, alphabet puzzles and games, picture cards alphabet books from the library, materials to make letters (pipe cleaners, glue, stencils), alphabet flash cards, dry erase boards or mini chalkboards, alphabet cassettes and cassette player, playdough with alphabet cookie cutters, and any other materials you want to include. Allow children to explore and use the materials in the Alphabet Corner throughout the week.

### *2. Touch It*

Provide each letter being studied in a variety of forms (magnetic, foam, sandpaper) for children to touch. To give children a fun way to form their own letters, place hair styling gel, shaving cream, salt, or sand in a tray for them and allow them to write the letters with their fingers.

### *3. Sign Up*

To practice writing letters, have children write their names on a large sheet of paper when they enter in the morning and use it to take attendance in the morning. Or ask children to write the "letter of the week" on a large

sheet of paper for some predetermined purpose such as lining up for recess. Provide crayons and markers of many colors. Collect the pages to form an alphabet Big Book.

#### 4. Letter Snacks

As you introduce a letter, choose a snack whose name begins with or contains the sound the letter stands for. This yummy treat will serve as a memory device to help children to associate the letter with the sound.

#### 5. Alphabet Caterpillar

Students will have fun creating this letter-perfect creature. Write each letter of the alphabet on a paper circle (laminated to withstand many uses). Mix the circles and spread them out on the table or floor. Have children work in pairs or small groups to form the caterpillar by placing its body parts (circles) in alphabetical order. Attach antennae to the A circle for the caterpillar's head.

#### 6. Moon and Stars

Using construction paper, cut out 26 stars and 26 crescent moons. On each moon, write an uppercase letter. On each star write a lowercase letter. Have children match the moons and stars.

### *7. Alphabet Sound Book*

Every week, when a letter is introduced, students will make a page for their personal alphabet book. On a sheet of paper children must first write the upper and lowercase form of the letter. Then they can paste or draw pictures of objects whose name begins with the sound the letter makes and write the word under the picture.

### *8. Letters in Our Names*

Write children's names on note cards and place them in a decorated box or can. Each day, choose one name, which will be the "special name of the day." Spend time having the class identify each letter in the chosen name, write the name on a sheet of paper, group the name with names selected from previous days (for example by first letter or by boy and girl), clap the number of syllables in the name, add the name to a name book organized in alphabetic order, and count the number of letters in the name.

### *9. Letter Actions*

Teach children an action for each letter they learn. As you introduce the letter, model the action and have children perform it. In later weeks, tell children you will hold up a letter card, and they should perform the action associated with the letter shown.

### *10. Newspaper or Magazine Search*



Distribute newspaper or magazines to each child. You can have children circle a particular letter each time it appears on a page. Or you can cut out words or pictures that begin with a particular letter. You might want to have children stop after finding ten occurrences of the letter.

#### *11. Alphabet Cereal Sort*

Place a pile of alphabet cereal on a napkin on each child's desk. Give children time to sort the cereal letters. Have them count the number of times they found each letter. Use these tallies to create a class chart. Children will enjoy a tasty letter treat when the activity is completed.

#### *12. Name Scrabble*

Have children use letter cards to spell their names. Then have them scramble the cards and reform their names. Next have each child ask a classmate to unscramble his or her name. Make sure the student's name card is close by for reference. When the name is formed, ask the students to identify each letter in the classmate's name.

### *13. Alphabet Concentration*

This classic game can be played with almost any skill. Limiting the game to 8-12 cards, make a set of letter cards - one letter to a card, two cards for each letter. Place the cards facedown on the table or floor. Have the children turn over two cards at a time. If the cards match, children keep them. The object of the game is to make as many matches as possible. You can also have children match uppercase letters to lowercase letters, or letter to picture of a word that starts with the sound of the letter.

### *14. Classroom Labels*

Label as many things as possible in the classroom. As you teach a letter of the alphabet let children walk around with clipboards and write as many things down as they can find that begins with that letter.

### *15. Letter Boxes*

Create a box for each letter of the alphabet. In each box put objects that begin with that particular letter. Allow children to manipulate, play, and sort things in the boxes. Invite children to donate things from home that can be added to the boxes.

### Read Aloud

The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). Belief in the value of reading to young children dates to the turn of the century when certain educators suggested that reading to youngsters was beneficial in developing their literacy skills (Morrow, O'Conner, & Smith, 1990). Recently the importance of reading to children has been reemphasized. Morrow et al. (1990) found research that suggests that reading to children develops:

(a) their awareness of the functions and uses of written language or what reading is all about and what it feels like, (b) concepts about print, books, and reading, and the form and structure of written language itself, (c) positive attitudes towards reading, and (d) children's self-monitoring and predictive strategies as a result of being read to (p.257).

Furthermore, Barnitz, Gipe, and Richards (1999) found that children who have been read to have more advanced language development, more advanced syntactic development, and more advanced written syntax than children with less book exposure. They also found reading aloud to children facilitated children's acquisition of standard English, especially for those children speaking various vernacular dialects of English. The modeling technique of reading aloud and responding is usually carried out in a whole-group setting. The teacher reads aloud to students and

encourages responses to the literature. Students have the opportunity to hear the teacher read with expression and fluency. The selection for reading should be a quality piece of children's literature that is related to themes being addressed in the classroom.

The purpose of reading aloud is to enhance comprehension and also to look at elements of print when appropriate.

Before reading, the book is introduced or reintroduced to the children by giving the title and author. Children may be asked to use this information to predict what the story is about. If appropriate, a brief discussion may take place about relevant concepts to be encountered.

During reading, teachers build positive attitudes by showing their own personal pleasure and interest. At times, the teacher may pause and ask the children what they think might happen next or ask them to fill in a predictable word based on the context of the story. Discussion during reading is encouraged as long as it is focused on the story. Children can be invited to chant repetitive phrases if it is a familiar book that has been read before.

After reading, students are encouraged to talk about the story in ways that personalize it for them. They are encouraged to ask questions of the teacher and of one another. Responses to the literature most often come at

the end of the reading when children can discuss the story, role play the story, reenact the story with puppets, or retell the story.

Following on the next page is a checklist that can be utilized for Reading Aloud.

## *Checklist for Reading Aloud*

- *Choose a Book*

Look for a book that:

- you will enjoy reading.
- supports and builds on the child's interests and experiences.
- has beautiful illustrations.
- is slightly above the child's current vocabulary level.
- introduces a new style such as poetry or a folk tale.
- 

Invite children to choose books as well and repeat familiar, well-loved books often.

- *Get to Know the Book*

Examine the illustrations so you can point out the information and clues in the pictures.

Read the story to yourself.

Plan ways to vary your voice (tone, volume, pauses) to fit the plot and characters.

Collect dress-up clothes, puppets, or other props related to the story that students can use to reenact to story.

- *Set the Stage for Success*

Help students get ready to listen.

Make sure students are comfortable and can see the book.

Make sure you are comfortable.

- *Before Starting the Book*

Read the title of the book.

Introduce the author and/or illustrator.

Talk about other books you've read by the same author and/or illustrator.

Show the cover and point out details in the illustration.

Talk about what type of book it is-true, make-believe, folk tale, realistic.

Describe where and when the story takes place.

Introduce the setting and the main characters.

Suggest things to look and listen for in the story.

Ask students to make predictions.

- *While Reading the Story*

Vary your voice to fit the characters and the plot.

Stop frequently to:

- add information that will help students understand what's happening.
- rephrase something that might be confusing.
- explain the meaning of a new word.
- invite students to predict what might happen next.
- ask students about the story and characters.
- show the pictures and describe what's happening.
- Share your own reactions to the story and characters.

Encourage participation by inviting the students to:

- join in with rhymes and repeated words and phrases.

- add the last word to a familiar part of the text.
- make different sounds, such as a sound of an animal in the story

- *After Reading the Story*

Ask questions to help the students:

- recall what happened in the story.
- relate the story to personal experiences.
- put themselves in the story.
- express ideas, opinions, and creativity.

- *Do a book-related activity so students can:*

- act out the story
- make up a sequel to the story which you write on a large piece of paper.
- draw pictures that show the events in the story then use them to retell the story.
- make a class book based on the theme of the book.
- write about the story in their journals.
- learn about the author/or illustrator
- Read the book again and again if the students are interested.



### Shared Reading

Fountas and Pinnell (1998) state, "Shared reading is, an excellent transition tool to help children gain valuable understandings about the reading process and how it works" (p.28). Compared to a read aloud, a shared reading is usually more interactive, with students and teacher participating together. Each shared reading situation is a relaxed social one, with emphasis on enjoyment and appreciation of the text. The general enthusiasm created by the shared reading draws all children, including reluctant readers, into the activity (Wright Group, 1996). Therefore all children participate fully regardless of ability level. Children are expected to join in with the teacher on words or phrases that they know. The relaxed, supportive atmosphere allows children to experiment as they develop strategies for predicting, confirming predictions, and self-correcting.

In shared reading the teacher will normally use a large text where the print is visible and will track the print with a pointer. Some common materials used for a shared reading lesson are big books, poem charts, song charts, pocket charts, or products of interactive writings. Characteristics of a good shared reading text are: an enlarged format; text featuring rhyme, rhythm, and/or repetition; text that will hold children's interest over repeated readings; and text that is easily remembered

and that provides opportunities for movement, drama, innovation, and other varieties of exploration. The class usually carries out the shared reading in a whole-group setting.

In a first shared reading, the teacher normally introduces the story, reads it to the children, and discusses it with them. The objective of the first shared reading is to let children enjoy and understand the story. During this first reading the teacher is also indirectly demonstrating the process of reading by clearly pointing to each word, modeling directionality, return sweep, and one-to-one correspondence of the written to spoken word.

The focus of a second shared reading is to have the children participate in the reading. Involving children in an enjoyable and purposeful way builds sense of story and ability to predict. It also may give the students the chance to behave like a reader. Following will be a some suggested activities for second readings.

Usually during subsequent shared readings the teacher focuses on new concepts, skills, or conventions of print during mini-lessons. However, Regie Routman recommends not making more than one or two teaching points in a shared reading session (1994). With the teacher as the facilitator, children will be able to orchestrate their reading behavior, learn about the conventions of print, and focus on some words that they will learn. Following

will also be some examples of possible mini-lesson topics for subsequent readings.

#### *Suggested Activities for Second Readings*

- *Movement-* Children brainstorm a movement or action that will represent a character, a word, or an action in the story. Incorporating movement helps children internalize a word's meaning. Children with limited language experience or for whom English is a second language will benefit greatly from this practice.
- *Chanting and clapping-* Children chant stories rhythmically and/or clap along.
- *Reading Aloud-* Children join in on words and phrases that they know as the teacher rereads the story.
- *Choral Reading-* Children read the story together, following as the teacher points to each word. Some parts can also be read by individuals while other parts are read by the class.
- *Taking Dramatic Roles-* Children are given the parts of characters in the story. It is fun to write the name of the character and/or draw the character on a card. The teacher can punch holes on the top of the

card and put yarn through it so that the students can wear it around their necks for all the class to see. Those students chosen to represent a character will read the spoken text of that character in a character-specific voice. While the rest of the class will read the remaining text, serving as the narrator.

- *Singing-* After reading a song or poem children can sing it. For example if they read the big book, Old MacDonald, during the second reading it might be fun to sing it.

#### *Mini-Lessons for Subsequent Shared Readings*

- *Book Knowledge-* Discuss such concepts as front of book, back of book, cover, title page, author, and illustrator.
- *Directionality-* Discuss such things as: where to begin on a page; how to read from left to right; where to go at the end of the line; and where to go at the end of a page.
- *Matching Text-* Write a sentence from the text on a sentence strip (try and choose a repetitive sentence). Hold the sentence up and ask students to

help you locate the sentence. Call students up to help you frame the sentence in the text, using their hand, cards, post-its, or highlighter tape. Take the sentence on the sentence strip and cut it up in front of the students, so that they can see the parts that make up the whole. Ask students to put the sentence back together in a pocket chart.

- *Letter-Sound Relationships*- Focus on sounds and their positions in words to help children use graphophonic/phonetic cues. For example discuss the sound /ch/ and locate a word that has that sound. Point out the two letters that make that sound c-h. Locate other words in the text that share this sound or brainstorm new words.
- *Locate Words*- Using Post-its, pointers, Wikki Sticks, slider frames, or translucent highlighter tape students may look for and find various categories of words. These categories may include-high frequency words, rhyming words, words that begin or end alike, contractions, plural words, pronouns, or words from specific word families.
- *Punctuation*- Choose a punctuation mark to introduce and/or discuss such as periods, question marks,

commas, exclamation marks, or quotation marks. Locate the particular punctuation mark in the text.

- *Capital Letters*- Discuss the use of capital letters. Locate capital letters in the text.

### Guided Reading

Guided Reading places the child in a more formal instructional reading situation. In kindergarten there is a smooth transition from shared to guided reading as children reveal that they are on the verge of reading. Teachers make the decision to move some children into guided reading by observing children's behaviors as they explore books independently and participate in shared readings. Shared reading demonstrates many skills, such as word-by-word matching, and children will begin to emulate this behavior as they read very simple books with natural language and only one or two lines of text per page.

"Guided reading is the heart of the instructional reading program" (Routman, 1994, p.38). Here the teacher actually shows children how to read and supports them by teaching them how to think critically about the process. The teacher shows the children what questions to ask and what strategies to use to become an effective reader. In guided reading the teacher must be aware of each child's capabilities, their background, and their interests in order to be successful.

During guided reading a teacher works with a small group of children at the same instructional level. Regie Routman states, "I find that small groups based according to ability that meet for fifteen to twenty minutes a day to develop specific strategies and reading fluency are

appropriate" (1994, p.39). The teacher selects and introduces book that is just right for the group of students. The teacher introduces the text in a way that helps the children read the text for meaning, while solving problems as needed. Each member of the group reads the text softly to themselves while the teacher listens and observes each student. The teacher provides support to each student as needed. The text is revisited with the students to examine some aspect of the text related to strategies, word study, understanding, problem solving, or interpreting (Fountas and Pinnell, 1998). Following is an example of a guided reading lesson in kindegartnen, a list of focus strategic skills, and a guided reading lesson planner.



## Guided Reading Lesson Plan Kindergarten

### Before the Lesson:

1. Read the book.
2. Think of a brief introduction (very short summary of story).
3. Decide on a focus. Think about what this group needs to learn at this stage?

Focuses include: Pictures Can Predict a Story;  
Directionality; One to One Correspondence;  
Locating Known Words; Locating Unknown Words;  
Using Beginning Sound/Getting Mouth Ready;  
Cross-Checking; Searching-Meaning Cues.

4. Strategy Prompts: Select a Focus Skill(See page 64 for a list of skills).
5. Choose One High Frequency Word to introduce or review

### During the Lesson:

1. Show the book. Tell students the name and author. Show the cover and the title page. Explain the difference. Give the brief introduction.
2. Teacher holds the book and students discuss pictures. If necessary, at this time, set the language. Think about words or sentence structure unfamiliar to students (different than the way young or ESL readers talk). You are building oral language at this point.
3. Pass out the books.

4. Locate the High Frequency Word in the text.
5. Tell students to find title page (reteach if necessary). Show students how you want them to read the title page. Model matching, pointing, and reading. Then invite all students to read the title page with you. Make sure their pointer fingers are under the first word and read the name of the book and author together.
6. During the First Reading, students read silently or in a whisper. Tell them to point and read the book in a soft whisper to themselves. Teacher invites students to begin reading then listens and observes each student as he/she points to each word read.
7. During Second Reading, students may choral read outloud to the teacher.
8. During Third Reading students can:
  - a. find a favorite page and read to the group
  - b. read in pairs
  - c. read the story in parts
  - d. retell the story using pictures as a guide
  - e. relate events in story to time in their own life
9. Follow up: Discuss The High Frequency Word- how does the word work.
  - a. can make a book using the High Frequency Word
  - b. while doing Poetry, Daily News, Interactive Writing, or Modeled Writing refer back to this word

- c. make this the word of the week
- d. when a child has been introduced to a sight word it can be put on his own personal word ring that can be taken home and practiced.
- e. Add word to Word Wall

10. Mini Language Lessons: A mini language lesson can take place at any point in the guided reading process where it is applicable and is based on the needs of the students.

#### Focus Strategic Skills

1. Directionality
2. One-to-One Correspondence
3. Locating Known Words
4. Locating Unknown Words
5. Cross Checking
6. Searching Semantics (Meaning) Cues

#### Strategy Prompts: Early Level Strategies

##### Focus: Directionality

Where do you start?

Where do you start reading?

Put your finger under the first word.

Which way do you go?

Now where do you go?

Can you find the title page?

Point to the title.

Focus: One to One Correspondence

Point under the words and read.

Read it with your finger.

Make it Match.

Did it match?

Were there enough words?

Did you run out?

Focus: Locating Known Words

Can you point to \_\_\_\_\_?

Show me \_\_\_\_\_?

How did you know that word was \_\_\_\_\_?

Focus: Locating Unknown Words

What would you see at the beginning of  
\_\_\_\_\_?

What would you see expect to see at the end of  
\_\_\_\_\_?

What would you expect to see in the word  
\_\_\_\_\_?

Yes, that is in the word, but what is at the  
start of the word \_\_\_\_\_?

Can you find \_\_\_\_\_?

How did you know that word was \_\_\_\_\_?

## Strategy Prompts: Higher Level Strategies

### Focus: Cross Checking

How did you know that was \_\_\_\_\_?

Is there another way to tell?

It could be \_\_\_\_\_, but look at \_\_\_\_\_.

### Focus: Searching Semantics (meaning) Cues

Look at the pictures.

You said \_\_\_\_\_. Did that make sense?

What happened in the story when \_\_\_\_\_?

What do you think it might be?

What do you think might happen?

## Guided Reading Lesson Planner

Before Lesson:

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher\_\_\_\_\_

Group\_\_\_\_\_ Student of the Day\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Book\_\_\_\_\_ Level\_\_\_\_\_

Strategy Focus\_\_\_\_\_

High Frequency Words \_\_\_\_\_

Prompts for Strategy Focus

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Book Introduction

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After Lesson:

Anecdotal Records (student of the day)

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Self Evaluation

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### Independent Reading

Independent reading is both part of, and the goal of, learning to read. Setting aside time for independent reading must be a priority in all classrooms. Many teachers find it works well to set aside five to ten minutes in their daily schedule for independent reading. Teachers may choose to call this time SSR(sustained silent reading, RR (recreational reading), DIRT (daily independent reading time), or DEAR (drop everything and read). Whatever the teacher chooses to call this time the importance of voluntary reading cannot be overstated. Children need many opportunities to explore and read appropriate materials by themselves.

In independent reading students are in charge of their own reading-by choosing their own material, by doing their own reading, and by taking responsibility to work through the challenges of the text. Independent reading provides students with the opportunity to apply reading strategies independently. It provides time to sustain reading behavior and to build confidence. A child can be given the choice to select something to read from a wide range of materials or from a special collection at his or her reading level. Or a child might be given the opportunity to "read the room", which means walking around with a pointer and reading everything that is displayed on the walls or on hanging charts. Poems, songs, pieces

composed through interactive and shared writing, big books, and class created books. Whatever the child chooses to read it has been shown that reading and rereading familiar texts supports young children's learning to read (Fountas and Pinnell, 1996). Therefore every child in every classroom, everyday, deserves the chance to behave like and enjoy the pleasure of being a good reader.



## CHAPTER THREE

### Instructional Components of Writing

#### Modeled Writing

Modeled writing serves as a powerful tool in kindergarten. It gets students' attention and introduces them to the writing process. Fountas and Pinnell state, "It is one of the most powerful elements in the early literacy framework because the teacher is helping children develop the skills they need to become more proficient writers within a meaningful context" (1996, p. 32). Modeled writing should begin on the first day of kindergarten.

Modeled writing takes place when the teacher writes in front of the students, usually on large chart paper. As the teacher writes he is also verbalizing what he is thinking and writing. The teacher makes explicit remarks about what he is doing, commenting on the layout, spacing, letter formation, spelling, punctuation, capital letters, and vocabulary. As children observe, they are learning to relate the spoken word to the written word.

There are two popular forms of modeled writing used in today's classrooms. The first is Morning Message. This usually occurs first thing in the morning. While the students are watching the teacher writes a message to them. The message could be about something that is going to occur that day in class or it could be about something

personal that is going to happen in the teacher's life. Morning Message is always a great way to start off modeled writing. In the first weeks of kindergarten students are still adjusting to the new situation and it takes the pressure off them so that they can enjoy the process.

The second method of modeled writing that is often used is Daily News. This method allows a student to share a message with the class. Each day the teacher selects a student to share something of interest orally with the class. This is a great way to involve students in the process of modeled writing, it makes it more personal for the students. A news item can be a personal event or story, an observation, or a piece of information. The teacher writes the students message on the large piece of chart paper, modeling the writing process. Then the student is asked to come up and illustrate the news, thereby connecting a visual representation with the written word. These daily news bulletins can be made into a class book at the end of each month, that way students can revisit them again and again. Another fun idea is to share the week's Daily News by sending home a class newspaper. The news statements can be copied onto a reproducible form created by the teacher and the student contributors can illustrate their statements. Then copies can be made for the whole class to take home and share with family members.

After the modeled writing message is written, the teacher takes a few minutes to ask children questions to familiarize them with conventions of writing. Then the class will read the message or news together as the teacher points to each word (shared reading). The teacher might also want to conduct a mini-lesson using the composed text. The teacher might use the text to review a letter, a high frequency word, a punctuation mark, or capital letters by asking students to search the text for these things. Once they are found the teacher might give a student a marker to circle them. The teacher could also choose to write a sentence from the message on a sentence strip. The teacher would then cut it up into individual words and punctuation marks in front of the students to demonstrate that parts(words) make up the whole (sentence). A student can then be asked to pick up the pieces and rearrange them correctly in a pocket chart.

### Shared Writing

Shared writing often develops naturally as a response to modeled writing. As students become more familiar with the writing process they begin to want to participate in it. Like in modeled writing, the teacher serves as a scribe but now asks children to collectively make decisions about what he should be writing. In shared writing the teacher's role is an enabling, supportive one that encourages and invites students to participate and enjoy the writing experience (Routman, 1994). Children will be asked to help make decisions about what letters represent the sounds they hear in various words. This guidance helps to bring sounds and their symbols together in the children's mind. Students will also be invited to reveal capital letters and punctuation that are needed to compose the message.

Shared writing is never composed strictly by the teacher, but rather the teacher invites a student or the group to collaboratively compose aloud the message. Shared writing can take on the form of Daily News where one student dictates a message or it could be the work of the class. Some popular forms of shared writing that are composed by the class are wall stories, retellings, poems, class journal entries, class observations of science experiments, class rules and charts, or other curriculum-related writings. As with modeled writing, shared writing

could be made into a class book or posted in the classroom to be reread.

When the shared writing is completed it then becomes shared reading material. The class reads the text while the teacher uses the pointer to follow along. Like with modeled writing, the teacher might use the shared writing for a mini-lesson focusing on such things as letters, high frequency words, capital letters, and punctuation.

### Interactive Writing

Unlike shared writing in which students compose messages and the teacher acts as scribe, interactive writing involves a sharing of the pen between teacher and students. In interactive writing students are actively involved in the planning and construction of text, writing as much of the text as they can with the teacher providing what they are unable to do. "Interactive Writing provides an authentic setting within which the teacher can explicitly demonstrate how written language works" (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, p.33). The process focuses student's attention on concepts and conventions of print, the sounds in words, and how those sounds connect with letters.

Interactive writing should be a regularly scheduled activity in kindergarten. It is usually conducted as a whole class activity, ranging in time from 5-10 minutes in the beginning of the year to 15-20 minutes as the year moves along. In the early period, the scope of the writing may be very simple, and the teacher might be an active writer as well as an active coach. As children progress they begin to take ownership of the pen and a writing project may be carried over several days or even weeks. The teacher guides the process and the pacing and provides assistance and instruction when they are needed.

The product of interactive writing does not need to be neat, but should be readable since it will be used as shared and independent reading at other times. The finished piece will have accurate spelling of all words and correct punctuation. The subject of interactive writing may be anything - writing lists, letters, or messages; retelling stories, labeling; writing recipes; recounting a group experience; observations of a science experiment; recording ideas; or creating a group story.

To begin interactive writing there are some materials that are needed. Like modeled and shared writing, the writing will be done on a large chart paper. Broad tip marking pens will be needed and it is helpful to have a variety of colors available in order to highlight letter patterns or common rimes. Correction tape will also be needed to cover up any unwanted mistakes. And a pointer should be available to help focus children's attention on a line of print. There should always be a classroom names chart near by and an alphabet chart that shows the letter with a matching picture for the letter's sound. The teacher should also have something readily available that she can use to model the formation of a letter or to complete a mini lesson on like a wipe board or a magnadoodle. Lastly it is always helpful to have individual wipe boards or travel magnadoodles for each student.

Before beginning a lesson the topic for interactive writing should be established. The topic should be something that is meaningful to the children involved. Next the students with guidance from the teacher establish the text. Lists may be established one word or phrase at a time. While narrative text is best established one sentence at a time. Once a sentence is agreed upon, the group counts the words in the sentence and counts the words on their fingers. The fingers represent the separate spoken words, and the spaces between fingers are easily compared to the spaces that will be created between each word on the chart paper. The agreed upon text is written, word by word, letter by letter. With coaching and guidance by the teacher, students are called upon to write a known letter or word. In the beginning children might be filling in just a few letters, perhaps those that can be linked with the names of members of the class. They might also be able to supply a few known high frequency words. "The technique gives teachers a chance to demonstrate saying words slowly and connecting the sounds that are embedded in words to the letters and clusters of letters that represent them" (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, p.33). During the writing, the teacher models, questions, and focuses attention on concepts of print, sounds in words, and the connection of sounds to print. The teacher supports letter recognition and formation using an



alphabet chart and the wipe board or magnadoodle. With less experienced writers the teacher will write more of the text and assist more frequently with letter formation. The message is read several times by the group both during the process and when the work is completed. The teacher must remember to reread the text from the beginning each time a new word is completed so that students remain focused. Completed work can be posted in class or turned into a big book.

Unlike other writing opportunities in which children are encouraged to use transitional spellings and write independently, in interactive writing there is an expectation of correctness. Since the children are just learning about print and conventional construction of text, it is expected that there will be mistakes that need to be corrected, it is part of the learning process. Therefore the teacher will use the correction tape to cover up errors and will guide each child to self-correct the mistake. By approaching this part of the process in a warm, straightforward way, teachers will avoid student embarrassment and model the on-going editing that takes place in real writing.

Since only one or two students will be working directly on the text at any one time, it is important to keep all students in the group actively involved in the interactive writing process. To maintain involvement

students can: form letters and words in the air, on the rug, on their hands, on wipeboards, or on travel magnadoodles; respond as a group to teacher questions and prompts for sounds, letters, spellings; use sign language to represent the letter that is being written; search the name or alphabet chart for the letter/sound that is being written; and use silent nonverbal signals. For the students that are not ready yet to write the letter of a given sound or a high frequency word there are other ways to give them a chance to be involved in the interactive process. These students could be called up to use their fingers to represent the space. They could also be asked to make the punctuation marks. Or one of these students could be called up to use the pointer when it is time to read or reread the finished product.

### Guided Writing

"Guided writing is the heart of the writing program" (Routman, 1994, p.66). It is a powerful approach that formally guides a child's development in writing, with special attention given to basic sound-symbol connections and writing strategies. Guided writing occurs after students have had many opportunities to see writing demonstrated aloud and in shared contexts. Through mini-lessons and conferences the teacher elicits from the child what the child knows and models the behaviors and strategies the child is having difficulty with, guiding and reinforcing the child's approximations along the way.

Guided writing helps develop the student's voice. There are opportunities for choice, decision making, peer response, and for making connections to students' lives. Guided writing is important in fostering self-confidence and creativity. It provides opportunities for children to learn to be writers. It also builds ability to write words and use punctuation. Guided writing takes place when students have time to write and the teacher is available for guidance. Guided writing may occur during whole class, small group, writer's workshop, journal time, content area writing, or any other form of authentic writing. Of these the most popular is Writer's Workshop which is discussed in detail on page 81.

### Independent Writing

The goal of all writing instruction is independent writing. Independent writing is generated by the child and requires very little teacher support. "The purpose of independent writing-like that of independent reading-is to build fluency, establish the writing habit, make personal connections, explore meanings, promote critical thinking, and use writing as a natural, pleasurable, self-chosen activity" (Routman,1994, p.67).

During independent writing, children construct words, hear and record sounds, use known words to get to words they don't know, and use words from the word wall and other environmental print. It is here that we see the relationship between what they are learning in interactive writing and how they encode messages in independent writing. Therefore observing independent writing helps the teacher plan for guided writing mini-lessons and suggests teaching points to raise during interactive writing.

One of the most popular forms of independent writing is journal writing in which they write regularly. Giving students personal journals encourages them to write. In their journals emergent writers can experiment with language and discover writing as a medium of self expression. Students' journal writing also provides a focus for instruction and means of assessing students' writing development over time. Only the student, however,

ever writes in his or her journal. Assessments can be written on separate evaluation forms or self-adhesive notes to stick on journal pieces. To get started with journals, the teacher will need to model how and what to write. Following is a lesson for introducing journal writing on the first day of kindergarten.

### *Lesson One: Introducing Journal Writing*

Children must perceive themselves as writers to become writers. We invite children to become authors on the first day of school, with the following teaching goal in mind: We want to assure children that they already know how to write and that their ways of writing will be honored in our classroom.

The first step in introducing children to writing is to build their confidence in themselves as writers. As we assure them that they are already writers, we gradually create a large sheet that honors children's writing in ways that are developmentally appropriate for the range of children in the class. A typical first day would sound like this as the teacher gradually builds the chart:

*Teacher:* Boys and girls, I know that you are already writers! I know that you already know how to write in wavy writing. If you can write in wavy writing like this (demonstrating on the large chart paper), do it in the air with your finger. Let's all write in the air with wavy writing. Oh, good! You're great at wavy writing!

*Children:* (wavy writing in the air)

*Teacher:* How about zig-zag writing? I know you can do zig-zag writing like this (demonstrating on the large chart paper). Let's do it in the air together: zig, zag, zig, zag. Wonderful! I knew you were good at zig-zag writing!

*Children:* (zig-zag writing in the air)

*Teacher:* How about loopy writing? Can you do loopy writing like this (demonstrating on the large chart paper)? Let's do it in the air together. Fabulous!

*Children:* (loopy writing in the air)

*Teacher:* Can you make things that kind of look like letters, like this (demonstrating letter-like forms on the large chart paper)? Now can you make some real alphabet letters like a, b, and c (demonstrating letters a, b, c on the large chart paper)?

*Children:* (varied responses)

This initial demonstration should take no more than five minutes. It is important to keep in mind that at the beginning of the year children's attention spans are very short, and they need to be actively involved in the demonstration. As the days progress other concepts of how to write in their journal can be modeled in other short lessons. Some of these concepts might include: writing something for every spoken word; writing from left to write; rereading what has already been written to determine what needs to be written next; putting a period at the end of the sentence, or writing the beginning sound of words.

## Writer's Workshop

### *Benefits of Writer's Workshop*

- *Increased Self-Esteem*

Since Writer's Workshop is totally individualized, all children, no matter where they are developmentally in their writing, are validated for their efforts. All children are viewed as authors with important stories to tell.

- *Student Empowerment*

Children not teachers, are taught to compliment one another with specific praise and are encouraged to celebrate one another's successes. They become more responsible for their own learning because they are charged with being positive critics. Knowing what to listen for in their classmates' work helps them know what to strive for in their own.

- *Risk-Free Environment*

Children are encouraged to write freely, using temporary or invented spelling. The emphasis is on content. Form and mechanics become secondary.

- *Phonemic Awareness/Phonics*

Phonemic Awareness and phonics, as they relate to reading and writing, are given an authentic setting during Writer's Workshop. Invented spelling is phonics in action.

Children's reading of their own invented spellings further reinforce the phonetic process.

- *Increased Fluency in Reading and Writing*

Early and emergent readers and writers become more fluent in classrooms where Writer's Workshop occurs because they are given opportunities to publish their own words.

Ownership becomes the vehicle for fluency, because they witness the fact that writing is really nothing more than thoughts written down.

- *Sample for Authentic Assessment*

Writer's Workshop provides children, teachers, and parents with writing samples that can be collected and evaluated in such a way as to show growth over time.

### *Organization and Structure of Writers Workshop*

You will need the following areas in your room:

*Mini-Lesson Area* -This area can simply be the rug area in your classroom.



*Peer Conferencing Area-* This is a separate area away from the desks in which two students can go to share their work.

*Materials Area-* This is where all the materials are kept for Writer's Workshop including: journals, folders for finished work, letter writing things, clipboards, index cards, paper, pencils, crayons, markers, date stamp, etc.

*Authors Chair Area-* This is a designated area of the room that can serve as the gathering place for whole class sharing. A special chair such as a painted chair, a rocking chair, director's chair or tall stool should be made available.

*Schedule Area-* A schedule should be posted with current group assignments. It is recommended to have pictures of the various centers posted so that groups will know exactly where they are to go. When it is time to rotate groups or clean up have a special signal.

### *Arrange Your Schedule*

*\*Mini-Lesson-* Spend 5-10 minutes everyday at the beginning of workshop for a mini-lesson.

Things to discuss during a mini-lesson:

- Reinforce procedures for Writer's Workshop
- Share or model some examples of writing: like poetry, writing a letter, or a recipe
- Punctuation, Capitalization

- Discuss beginning, middle, end of a story
- Descriptive Language
- Environmental Print, Word Wall

*\*Center Time-* There are four centers a day. Groups visit two centers a day according to the schedule, either Choice Center and Teacher Center or Journals and Choice Center.

Time spent at each center is 20 minutes.

1. Teacher Center: guided writing and individual conferences

2. Journals (Self-Selected Writing): the child writes in a journal about whatever he or she wants to write .

3. Choice Activity: children get to choose an activity from the writing corner. Examples of these activities are:

Write the Room: children walk around the room with a clipboard and pencil reading and recording the environmental print

Write a Letter: materials to write a letter are made available: stationary, envelopes, stickers, etc.

Write a Recipe: children write a recipe on a recipe card

Write a Poem: children write a poem or a song on chart paper

Write a Picture: Various pictures are made available for students to choose from and create a story to go along with it. These pictures can be cut out from magazines.

Hot Topics: as specific content-area materials are covered, current events are discussed, field trips are completed, or discoveries are made add these topics to the "hot topics chart" so they can be readily available to write about (don't forget rebus pictures)

*\*Author's Chair-* Writer's Workshop ends with Author's Chair (10 minutes) Several children share their work with the class.

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APPENDIX B  
REFLECTION

## Reflection

I chose this topic, mainly because of my true love of teaching the kindergartner child. However I must admit that I see it as becoming more challenging, mainly because of the increasing variation among young children that enter the kindergarten program today. My kindergarten class usually has children who have been in group settings for three or four years as well as children who are participating for the first time in an organized early childhood program. Sometimes my class might have students both with identified disabilities and children with exceptional abilities, children who are already independent readers and children who are just beginning to acquire some basic literacy knowledge and skills. I also have students in my class who are at varying levels of proficiency in English. The IRA and The NAEYC define it best in their joint position statement: "Diversity is to be expected and embraced, but it can be overwhelming when teachers are expected to produce uniform outcomes for all, with no account taken of the initial range in abilities, experiences, interests, and personalities of individual children." (1998, p.5) It can become frustrating , especially when the state of California, school districts, and parents put pressure on the kindergarten program to become more academic but ignore the facts. They refuse to acknowledge kindergarten as essential enough to mandate

and they continue to deny the fact that the new function requires more instructional time than presently exists in traditional kindergarten. We need to focus on the whole child in kindergarten. This includes not only the social, affective, and physical but also the cognitive areas of learning.

One major goal in my kindergarten program has always been to help children become more comfortable in a formal classroom setting. It can be a major adjustment for some.

Five-year-old children who enter kindergarten must learn how to sit quietly, to share, to listen, to communicate cooperatively, and to do what is asked. For some students this means adjusting to far less personal attention than they probably are use to. I feel that helping children meet this emotional and behavioral challenge is extremely important.

Another key priority in my kindergarten program is to prepare children to learn to read. I want children to leave my kindergarten with a solid familiarity with the structure and use of print. They should know about the format of books and other print resources. I want them to be familiar with sentence-by-sentence, word-by-word, and sound-by-sound analysis of language. They should achieve basic phonemic awareness and the ability to recognize and write the letters of the alphabet. I want my students to have a good attitude about literacy. I want them to feel



comfortable with learning from print, since much of their future education will depend on this. My kindergartners should leave with an interest in all types of language and knowledge that books can bring them enjoyment.

In reviewing the research for this paper, I was amazed to find no evidence that the all-day kindergarten was detrimental to the child. I did find a few studies that indicated the all-day kindergarten made no difference, but in closely reading those studies I felt that the problem was in the inadequate use of the extra time. The time was used for more experience with play, more rest times, and nap times instead of being used for more literacy experiences. I also saw in these few studies no attempts to make the program more child centered, that is giving the child literacy instruction at his or her appropriate level. I was disappointed that there has not been much recent research completed, and I feel that today more than ever the benefits of the all-day kindergarten need to be strongly addressed. I will anticipate and will always be on the look for new research in the area of the all-day kindergarten. I will continue my support of the all-day kindergarten based on the research that I discovered and my experiences as a kindergarten teacher.

In conclusion I feel that the evidence clearly indicates that many children, particularly those who are

disadvantaged, would experience greater success in school if they were provided a well-planned, all-day kindergarten program. The bottom line is they provide a more intensive, on-going, enriched language and literacy experience for the young child. I would like to end with a quote that sums up my feelings for the need of an all-day kindergarten:

A child's first six years are important ones in which a lasting impression is created upon individual intelligence, personality, and physical and mental growth: therefore, the public rightfully can demand the best possible education in those crucial years. This must include the availability of a sound full-day kindergarten program. . . (Johnson, 1974)

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